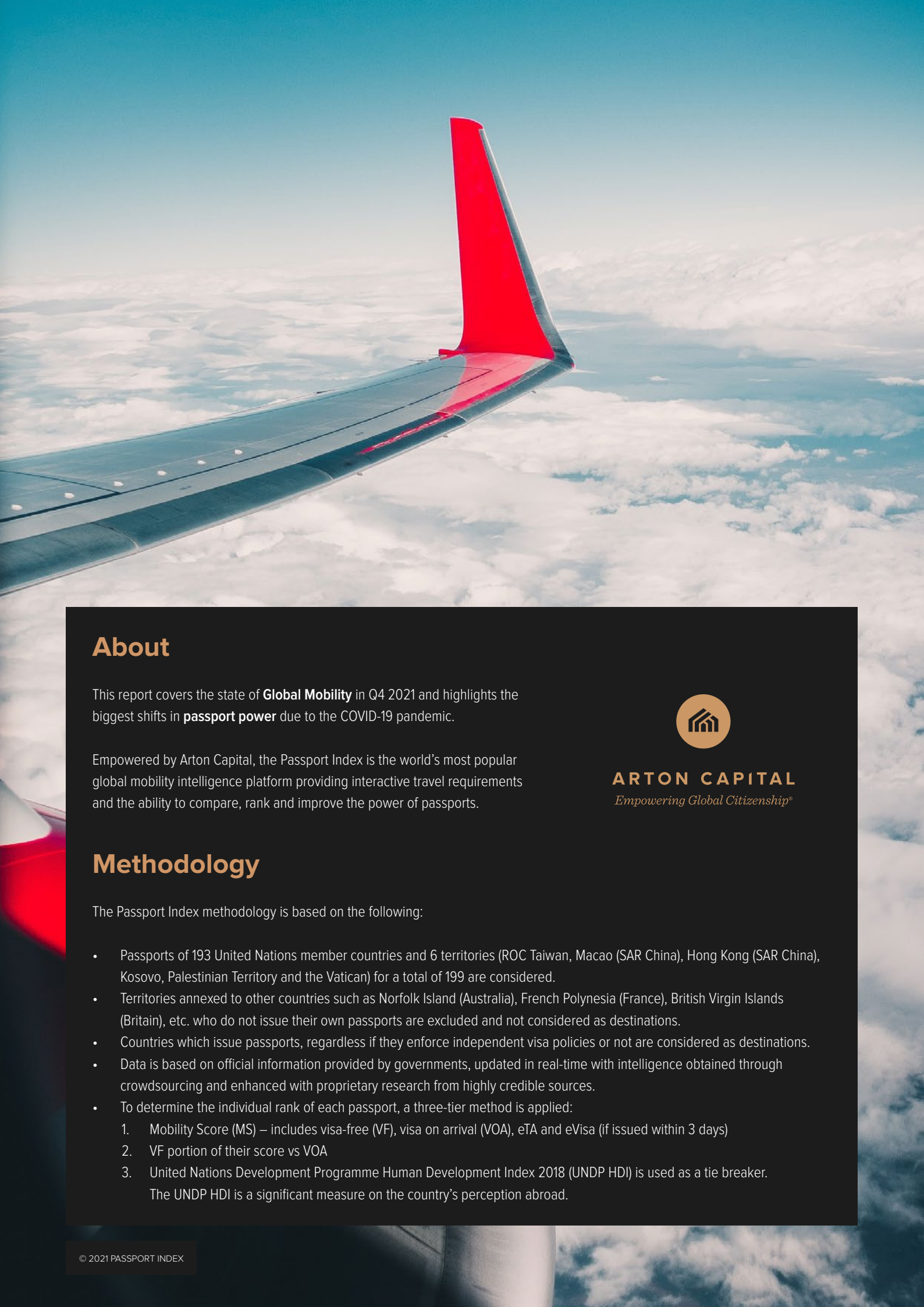




Global Mobility on the Rise





About

This report covers the state of **Global Mobility** in Q4 2021 and highlights the biggest shifts in **passport power** due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Empowered by Arton Capital, the Passport Index is the world's most popular global mobility intelligence platform providing interactive travel requirements and the ability to compare, rank and improve the power of passports.



ARTON CAPITAL
Empowering Global Citizenship®

Methodology

The Passport Index methodology is based on the following:

- Passports of 193 United Nations member countries and 6 territories (ROC Taiwan, Macao (SAR China), Hong Kong (SAR China), Kosovo, Palestinian Territory and the Vatican) for a total of 199 are considered.
- Territories annexed to other countries such as Norfolk Island (Australia), French Polynesia (France), British Virgin Islands (Britain), etc. who do not issue their own passports are excluded and not considered as destinations.
- Countries which issue passports, regardless if they enforce independent visa policies or not are considered as destinations.
- Data is based on official information provided by governments, updated in real-time with intelligence obtained through crowdsourcing and enhanced with proprietary research from highly credible sources.
- To determine the individual rank of each passport, a three-tier method is applied:
 1. Mobility Score (MS) – includes visa-free (VF), visa on arrival (VOA), eTA and eVisa (if issued within 3 days)
 2. VF portion of their score vs VOA
 3. United Nations Development Programme Human Development Index 2018 (UNDP HDI) is used as a tie breaker. The UNDP HDI is a significant measure on the country's perception abroad.

“

Of all the books in the world,
the best stories are found between
the pages of a passport.

”

Introduction

It's been a turbulent two years for global mobility. In just the past month alone, news of the Omicron variant has flooded news feeds, grounded thousands of flights and impacted many families' holidays.

Despite the setbacks, global mobility has regained substantial ground this year. This year, Passport Index data paints a picture of a world in recovery, bolstered by growing access to vaccines and an inherent desire to move, meet and connect across the globe.

“The Passport Index and World Openness Score not only offer the only real-time barometer of global mobility but also reflect COVID-19 management,” says Armand Arton, the President and CEO of Arton Capital. “Looking at the data, we can see that the success stories of 2021 have high vaccine access and uptake. Meanwhile, countries that are still combatting COVID-19 may remain stationary in the rankings for some time.”

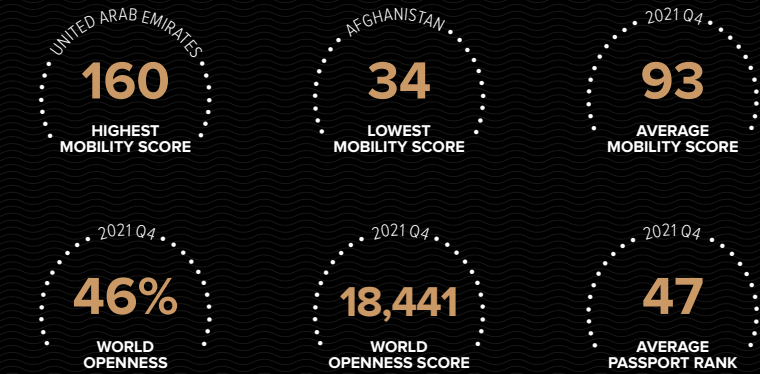
World Openness Score up nearly 20%

Looking at the trajectory of global mobility, the World Openness Score (WOS) paints a clear picture of overarching trends by calculating the total visa waivers around the world in real-time.

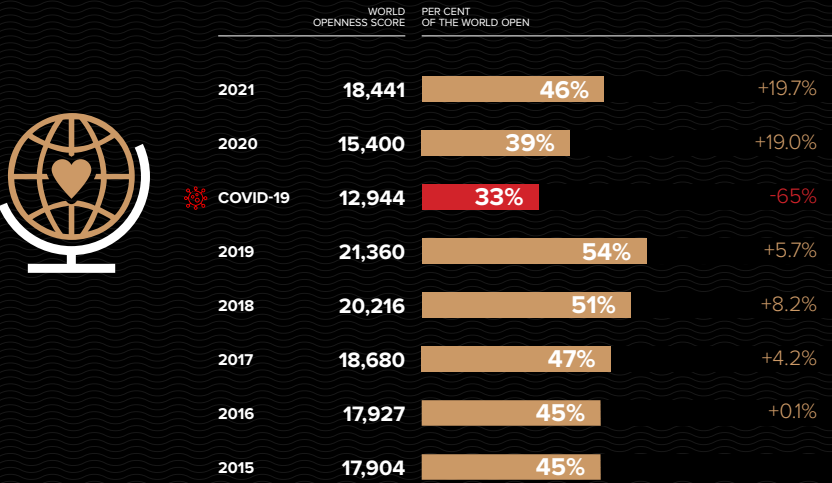
When tracking began in 2015, the WOS score climbed roughly 6% per year on average from 17,904 that first year to an all-time high score of 21,360 in 2019. The WOS fell off a cliff during COVID-19, tumbling a staggering 65% to a low of 12,944.

Since the beginning of 2021, the WOS has made encouraging strides, growing 19.7% to end the year with a score of 18,441 – roughly the same level as 2017. With the WOS climbing dramatically for the second year in a row, there is reason to believe global mobility is well on its way to a full recovery.

The Global Mobility Barometer 2021 Q4



The World Openness Score 2021 Q4



The world’s most powerful passport

The United Arab Emirates nabbed the coveted title of “World’s Most Powerful Passport” in 2021, based on the Passport Index. Boasting a mobility score of 160, the Emirati passport grants widespread visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to a large swathe of the world. It’s an impressive comeback from last year when the Gulf country ranked 14th in the world, mainly due to COVID-19 border closures.

The UAE was the global leader in passport mobility in 2019 when the passport enabled visa-free or visa-on-arrival travel to 179 nations worldwide. Since then, the country’s leadership has remained committed to rebuilding – and expanding – those strong international relationships.

As the host of the Expo 2020 Dubai (which runs through March 2022), the UAE improved its passport power by subsidizing country pavilions for lower-income nations in exchange for visa-free agreements. The result? The most inclusive world’s fair in history, a record visitor turnout, and the UAE’s rapid ascent in the passport rankings. The UAE is not only the highest-ranking Arab country on the Passport Index but also the only one in the top 10.



The Most Powerful Passports 2021 Q4



A three-way tie for second place

Germany, Finland, and Italy have tied for the world’s second most powerful passports in 2021 – each with a mobility score of 152. It’s great news for Italy, which ranked No. 4 in 2020, while Finland held steady in the same position for the second straight year.

Germany, however, relinquished the top spot. After plunging in passport power from 172 to 111 in early 2020, Germany rebounded enough by the end of last year to snag the coveted No. 1 position in 2020. And while the EU nation continued to improve its mobility this year, it wasn’t quite enough. The UAE outpaced Germany by securing 43 new visa-free agreements (or successfully removing COVID restrictions) compared with Germany’s 18.

Around the world in third

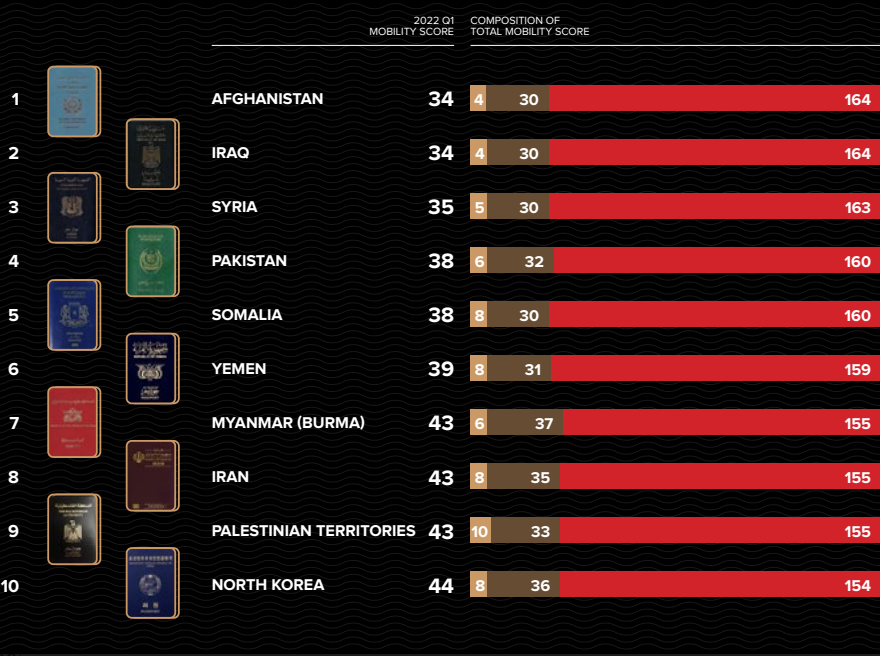
Seven countries share the position of third-strongest passport: Austria, Denmark, Luxembourg, New Zealand, South Korea, Sweden, and Switzerland. The mobility scores of each country in this broad pool shows a sharp, V-shaped curve that peaks in 2019 around 171-172, dips to roughly 78-80 in 2020, then rapidly increases to 151 in 2021. While still 20 points short of pre-pandemic numbers, the sharp uptick – and wide geographic spread from the EU to Asia and Oceania – reflects the resurgence of visa-free agreements around the world as vaccine availability improves and border restrictions ease.



Australia finally cracks the top five

Belgium, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Australia tied for 4th place with a mobility score of 150. Australia’s ascendance is particularly notable since the antipodean country has historically fallen just shy of the top 5, ranking 6th in 2019 and 7th in 2020. The results come as a surprise, given that the Pacific nation kept its borders tightly shut for much of the past two years, only recently reopening to some fully vaccinated travelers at the end of 2021. Even so, Australia has made a dramatic comeback with 94 visa-free agreements and 51 visa-on-arrival agreements in place.

The Least Powerful Passports 2021 Q4





The US passport bounces back

Rounding out the top rankings, seven European countries – Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Ireland, Malta, Norway and Poland – and, perhaps most unexpectedly, the United States, have all tied for 5th most powerful passport in 2021. Before 2020, the US consistently ranked No. 3 or 4 globally, peaking in 2019 with a mobility score of 171.

After imposing pandemic-related travel bans on several countries last year – many of which reciprocated – the American passport plummeted to 19th in the world, behind Uruguay, Singapore and Vatican City. The US passport still lags well behind 2019 levels, but jumped 14 spots in 2021 alone (a feat shared only by the UAE), so there is reason to believe 2022 will bring greater mobility for Americans.



Croatia gains visa-free to the US

In September, Croatia became the second Balkan country (after Slovenia in 1997) to join the US Visa Waiver Program, enabling passport holders from roughly 40 participating nations to travel to the US for business and tourism without a visa for a visa up to 90 days at a time.

According to the US Embassy in Croatia, countries must meet requirements related to “counterterrorism, law enforcement, immigration enforcement, document security, and border management” to participate in the program.

Not only does the country’s approval signal a closer economic and security relationship between the Balkan nation and the US, but it also means a much faster and smoother travel experience for Croatian passport holders. Instead of lining up to apply for a visa at an embassy, Croatian citizens can now fill in an online pre-departure form via the Electronic System for Travel Authorization in a matter of minutes.

Overall, Croatia’s mobility score has seen a sharp recovery this year, increasing from a low of 106 in mid-2020 to 145 in 2021. And the country’s ranking has surpassed pre-pandemic times: In 2019, Croatia ranked No. 10 in terms of passport power but moved up to 9th place in 2020 and held steady in 2021.





Blue passports reign supreme

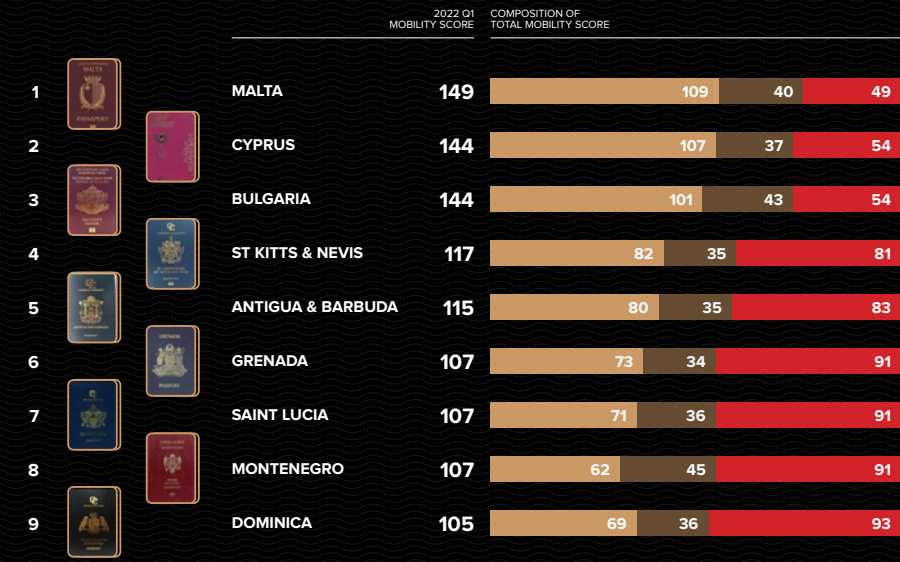
In 2021, blue passports dominated. Out of 199 countries tracked by the Passport Index, 83 have a blue passport cover, including the US, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Barbados, Bhutan, Dominica, El Salvador and more. By comparison, 67 countries have a red passport; 42, green; and 7, black.

While it varies widely by country and culture, blue passports often symbolize the “new world”, free markets and the ocean. Red covers tend to be associated with Communist countries or Christian history, while green is often the color of choice among Muslim countries because it has religious significance. As the rarest color, black tends to symbolize local culture or politics and, on a practical level, hides wear and tear.

The color blue clocked yet another vote of confidence this year when South Korea changed its passport jacket from green to blue in December 2021. But it’s not just the travel document’s color that has seen an update. The new South Korean passport will also feature more than a dozen security features, expanded pages, sturdier polycarbonate pages, and 20 national treasure illustrations (up from two in the previous design).

Color aside, South Korea’s passport remains one of the world’s strongest, ranking third on the Passport Index in 2021. With a mobility score of 151, South Koreans can visit a total of 99 countries visa-free and another 46 visa-on-arrival.

The Most Powerful CBI Passports 2021 Q4



WORLD’S PASSPORTS IN YOUR POCKET





**Mobility
is Opportunity.**

**Opportunity
is Evolution.**

